What is Claimed is:

1. A method of treating pathogenic polyclonal B cell activation or class switching in a patient, the method comprising:

administering to said patient an effective dose of a CD1 blocking agent, wherein said blocking agent is characterized as interfering with T cell recognition of CD1 and is inhibitory of CD1 signaling;

wherein said dose is effective to treat the symptoms of said polyclonal B cell activation or class switching.

2. The method according to Claim 1, wherein said pathologic polyclonal B cell activation or class switching results in systemic lupus erythematosus.

3. The method according to Claim 2, wherein said CD1 blocking agent is a glycolipid or phospholipid.

4. The method according to Claim 2, wherein said CD1 blocking agent is a polypeptide.

5. The method according to Claim 4, wherein said polypeptide is an antibody or fragment thereof.

6. The method according to Claim 5, wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

7. The method according to Claim 6, wherein said monoclonal antibody is a human or humanized antibody.

8. The method according to Claim 7, wherein said monoclonal antibody specifically binds to human CD1d.

9. The method according to Claim 7, wherein said monoclonal antibody binds to

multiple human CD1 isotypes.

10. The method according to Claim 5, wherein said antibody comprises a cocktail of monoclonal antibodies that bind to multiple human CD1 isotypes.

11. The method of Claim 4, wherein said polypeptide is soluble CD1 or a glycolipid bound to CD1.

12. The method according to Claim 2, wherein said administration is by intravenous injection.

13. A method according to Claim 2, further comprising administering to said patient a second therapeutic agent for the treatment of systemic lupus erythematosus.

14. The method according to Claim 4, wherein said polypeptide is a soluble T cell antigen receptor.